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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - IRAQI CONSTITUTION IRAN
NUCLEAR PROGRAM
PARIS - MONDAY, AUGUST 08, 2005

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

- [1](#)1. IRAQI CONSTITUTION
- [1](#)2. IRAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

MANY OF TODAY'S FRONT PAGES DEVOTE THEIR LEAD STORIES TO SUMMER ISSUES, SUCH AS THE RISING COST OF VACATIONING IN FRANCE. ACCORDING TO LEFT-OF-CENTER LIBERATION, ONE PERSON OUT OF THREE IN FRANCE NEVER TAKES A HOLIDAY. FOR POPULAR FRANCE SOIR "TAKING A HOLIDAY IS TOO EXPENSIVE" WHILE CATHOLIC LA CROIX'S FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL ANALYZES FRANCE'S NEW VACATIONING TRENDS. RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO DIFFERS WITH A LEAD DEVOTED TO FRANCE'S "PAKISTANI NETWORKS" AND AN EDITORIAL ON THE IRAQI CONSTITUTION. LE FIGARO ALSO DEVOTES A MAJOR REPORT ON THE PENTAGON'S "PARTIAL TROOP WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ." (SEE PART C) LEFT-OF-CENTER LE MONDE LEADS WITH TONY BLAIR'S NEW RULES TO FIGHT TERRORISM, INCLUDING RESTRICTIONS ON ASYLUM LAWS. ITS SECOND FRONT-PAGE STORY READS: "TEHERAN REJECTS EUROPEAN NUCLEAR OFFER." POPULAR RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE PARISIEN TITLES ITS REPORT: "IRAN, A SOURCE OF CONCERN FOR THE WEST." (SEE PART C)

RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE JOURNAL DU DIMANCHE INTERVIEWS FM DOUSTE-BLAZY ON IRAN: "OUR OFFER TO IRAN WAS SUBSTANTIAL. IT OPENS THE DOOR TO A NEW VISTA OF RELATIONS WITH EUROPE AND THE WORLD. OUR DESIRE FOR IRAN TO STAY AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE IS SHARED NOT ONLY BY THE EUROPEAN TROIKA BUT ALSO BY OUR EU PARTNERS AND BY RUSSIA, CHINA AND JAPAN. THE BIG CHALLENGE FOR US IS TO CONVINCE IRAN OF OUR GOOD FAITH. AS ALWAYS, FRANCE IS PROMOTING A DIPLOMACY OF DIALOGUE AND RESPECT FOR ALL PEOPLE. THIS DOES NOT PRECLUDE BEING FIRM. BY ASKING FOR RESPECT OF THE GIVEN WORD WE CAN AVOID RADICALIZATION OF THE IRANIAN POSITION, AS WELL AS RADICALIZATION AGAINST THE IRANIANS BY OTHER NATIONS, INCLUDING SOME AMONG THE MOST POWERFUL. THE DANGER IS REAL." DOUSTE-BLAZY SPEAKS ALSO ABOUT THE ISRAELI PULLOUT FROM GAZA: "IT IS A COURAGEOUS INITIATIVE BY SHARON."

THE SURPRISE RESIGNATION OF BENJAMIN NETANYAHU FROM THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IS A FRONT-PAGE STORY IN LE FIGARO: "HIS EARLY DEPARTURE FROM THE GOVERNMENT SIGNALS AN EARLY RACE FOR POWER IN THE LIKUD. BUT HIS RESIGNATION HAS NOT HALTED THE PROCESS FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM GAZA, ALTHOUGH IT HAS PROBABLY GIVEN NEW HOPE TO THE SETTLERS AND THE ISRAELI EXTREME RIGHT."

IN ECONOMIC NEWS, LA TRIBUNE GIVES PROMINENT COVERAGE TO THE U.S. ECONOMY'S ABILITY TO CREATE NEW JOBS. IN HIS EDITORIAL, TITLED "A TRIUMPHANT AMERICA," FRANCOIS XAVIER-PETRI COMMENTS: "MONTH AFTER MONTH, A TRIUMPHANT AMERICA CONTINUES TO WIDEN THE GAP WITH EUROPE. MORE THAN EVER, THE GEOGRAPHY OF WORLD ECONOMIES IS LEAVING THE LION'S SHARE TO ASIA AND THE AMERICAS. AND THE WORST PART IS THAT THERE IS NOTHING ON THE HORIZON THAT INDICATES A CHANGE FOR THE OLD CONTINENT."

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

IRAQI CONSTITUTION

"THE IRAQI CALENDAR"

PIERRE ROUSSELIN IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO (08/08): "IRAQI LEADERS HAVE A WEEK TO REACH AN AGREEMENT ON THE CONSTITUTION. IF THE U.S. IS PUSHING SO HARD FOR THE AUGUST 15 DATE TO BE HONORED, IT IS BECAUSE OF ITS OWN NOVEMBER 2006 POLITICAL AGENDA. FROM NOW TILL THEN PRESIDENT BUSH WILL DO ALL HE CAN TO SHOW THAT HIS IRAQI POLICY IS A SUCCESS. RESPECTING THE CALENDAR IN IRAQ IS ALSO IMPORTANT FOR SYMBOLIC REASONS: UNTIL NOW THE CONSTITUTION HAS BEEN WASHINGTON'S MAIN POLITICAL SUCCESS IN IRAQ, WITH THE JANUARY ELECTIONS. WASHINGTON IS HOPING THAT A NEW POLITICAL SUCCESS IN IRAQ WILL REVERSE THE NEGATIVE TREND ON THE SECURITY FRONT. SINCE THE END OF JULY, ATTACKS ON U.S. TROOPS HAVE GROWN. BUT TOO MUCH FOCUS ON THE IRAQI CALENDAR ITSELF CAN DETRACT FROM THE FINAL OBJECTIVE. THE TASK AT HAND IS AS ARDUOUS AS IT IS CRUCIAL: THE OBJECTIVE IS FOR THE KURDS, THE SHIITES AND THE SUNNIS TO AGREE ON THE IRAQ OF TOMORROW, AN IRAQ FOR WHICH AMERICA HAS MOBILIZED ALL OF ITS FORCES. A MAJOR QUESTION IS THE ROLE OF ISLAM IN

TOMORROW'S IRAQ. THE AMERICANS WILL HARDLY ACCEPT FOR IRAQ TO BECOME AN ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OR FOR WOMEN TO HAVE TO SUBMIT TO THE LAWS OF THE CHARIA. THE TRIANGULAR BARTERING AMONG THE VARIOUS ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IS LOOKING TOO COMPLEX AND THE CONSEQUENCES ARE TOO OMINOUS FOR THE JOB TO BE RUSHED IN A WEEK."

IRAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM

"IRAN REJECTS EUROPEAN NUCLEAR OFFER"

MOUNA NAIM IN LEFT-OF-CENTER LE MONDE (08/08): "THE U.S., CANADA AND ISRAEL AS WELL AS SOME OF IRAN'S NEIGHBORS HAVE, TO DIFFERENT DEGREES, FORMULATED CRITICISM AGAINST THE EUROPEAN OFFER TO IRAN. BUT SINCE MARCH, WASHINGTON HAS SOMEWHAT CHANGED ITS APPROACH AND PROVED TO BE MORE 'UNDERSTANDING.' SINCE THEN THE EUROPEANS' JOB HAS BEEN TO FIND A 'POINT OF EQUILIBRIUM' BETWEEN IRAN'S RIGHT TO A CIVILIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND DEMANDS FOR REASSURANCE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. THE EUROPEANS UNDERSCORE THE NEED FOR 'ASSURANCES OF TRUST' BETWEEN IRAN AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY."

"IRAN: A SOURCE OF CONCERN FOR THE WEST"

BRUNO FANUCCHI IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE PARISIEN (08/08): "IS THE WORLD ON THE BRINK OF A MAJOR NEW INTERNATIONAL CRISIS? THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT IS KNOWINGLY RUNNING THE RISK OF SUCH A CRISIS. IN VIOLATION OF LAST DECEMBER'S AGREEMENT, IRAN PLANS TO RE-LAUNCH ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM TODAY. PRESIDENT BUSH HAS ALREADY WARNED THAT THE U.S. DOES NOT EXCLUDE THE USE OF FORCE TO KEEP THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC FROM ACQUIRING NUCLEAR WEAPONS. IN SPITE OF ALL THE WARNINGS, FOR TEHRAN IT IS A MATTER OF NATIONAL PRIDE. AS HE WELCOMED HIS SYRIAN COUNTERPART, THE IRANIAN PRESIDENT SAID THAT COMMON THREATS AGAINST THEM BROUGHT THEM CLOSER TOGETHER, 'MAKING THEIR COOPERATION EVEN MORE OF A NECESSITY.' AS AN ANTI-AMERICAN 'FRONT' IN THE MIDDLE EAST." HOFMANN